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NRO REVIEW COMPLETED

28 March 1960

REFERENCE TO: Chief, Development Branch, DOD



SUBJECT: Placement of OGD Payload in CORONA Series

PROBLEM:

To determine the best time for launch of the OGD package within the CORONA series in order to make the best use of the cover that would accrue therefrom.

FACTS RELATING TO THE PROBLEM:

1. The remaining payloads for the CORONA, ARGON, and CORONA Prime programs are as follows:
 - a. Five camera payloads of 1959 CORONA series.
 - b. Four ARGON payloads for 1960.
 - c. Eight camera payloads for CORONA Prime.
 - d. One OGD payload.
 - e. One biometrical payload programmed with possible camera substitute.
2. The photo season for intelligence camera shots is considered to be over at the end of October.
3. Press activity relative to true purpose of the DISCOVERER program is friendly; however, will become more speculative as re-entry techniques are perfected and SAMOS begins to fly.
4. The first SAMOS shots will not be recoverable.
5. The OGD payload is ready to fly.

SUGGESTION:

1. At present, press activity in its discussion of the DISCOVERER has apparently accepted the fact that the DISCOVERER series is the R & D program

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for the follow-on SAMOS and MIDAS reconnaissance satellite programs. Specifically, the purpose of the program has been described in many articles as an effort to perfect re-entry.

2. The failure of the series to perfect re-entry has lent credence to the R & D cover of the program and this type of explanation should continue to suffice until re-entry has been successfully accomplished.

3. Successful launches of MIDAS and SAMOS this fall might also promote speculation about the need for further R & D; however, the DISCOVERY series might still be justified as a continuing R & D effort exploring re-entry techniques which are different from those used in the first series of non-recoverable SAMOS vehicles.

DISCUSSION:

1. SAMOS cover is presently holding up and will continue to do so until the re-entry feature of the program is sufficiently proven.

2. Evidence of the results of the test objectives of SAMOS photo could be used to better advantage at a time when speculation about the true mission is more openly discussed than at present.

RECOMMENDATION:

That the DOD payload be flown at a later date than SAMOS cover deteriorates, hopefully, after the summer photo season.

SIGNED


Assistant Cover Officer
DOD

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DCD-DC/P:Cover 

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